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Long Knife cases colors for first mission in Afghanistan



Photo by Spc. Angel Turner, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas— Col. William Benson (left), commander of the 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div., and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Menton (right), the brigade's senior enlisted advisor, case the brigade colors during a ceremony on Cooper Field Oct. 26 here.

By Spc. Angel Turner
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas— Trained and ready, Soldiers assigned to 1st Cavalry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team "Long Knife," cased their unit colors during a ceremony on Cooper Field Oct. 26 here.

The ceremony marked the beginning of a new mission the unit will begin in the upcoming weeks.

"Today, having celebrated its seventh birthday, the Long Knife brigade is again standing on Cooper Field to case its colors in preparation for deployment," said Col. William Benson, commander of 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. "This is the fifth casing ceremony the brigade has conducted in just over seven years of activation."

With three deployments to Iraq in its short history, this will serve as the brigade's first deployment to Afghanistan.

"We deploy as the first security forces assistance brigade sent to Afghanistan. Our mission is to develop the capabilities of the Afghan Army and Police so they may assume the lead for security in their new country. This mission harkens to another fledgling nation

with a new Army that was in need of professionalization at its genesis," Benson stated, referring to the beginning of the U.S. Army and the assistance it received from other nations.

Soldiers of the brigade have completed several months of training including a rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk as a final training event leading up to this deployment.

The brigade will field Security Force Advise and Assist Teams. Essential to improving Afghan National Security Forces' capabilities and helping them secure their country, these teams are made up of trained officers and noncommissioned officers who will advise, assist, and enable Afghan security forces.

"This brigade is one of the very first to deploy to Afghanistan in a formation that is specifically tailored to conduct security force assistance, a key activity to support transition to overall security responsibility to Afghan Forces," stated Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division. "This is a vital effort the brigade will shape and execute."

Standing in the brisk morning air, many Soldiers showcased deployment patches on their right arm. This not only displayed their combat experience but also the sacrifice they made in leaving fam-

ily and friends behind to support the overseas missions.

"You are embarking on what is perhaps your second, third or even fourth deployment or more. You are the best our country has to offer and we owe you respect and admiration for your steadfast loyalty and devotion to duty," Ierardi added.

The "Long Knife" Brigade will uncase their colors during a transfer of authority ceremony in Afghanistan. During the TOA ceremony, the unit will assume the mission from 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in Laghman and Kapisa Provinces.

With only portions of the brigade deploying, the Soldiers staying behind will continue to train and prepare for future missions.

As the ceremony came to an end, Benson gave everyone something to look forward to in the upcoming year.

"In closing, I would like to thank all of you for coming today. And this may seem a bit premature but I would like you all to reserve a date for another ceremony, a little over nine months from now right here on Cooper Field, a ceremony with a lighter purpose—to welcome the Long Knife Brigade back home," Benson stated.

Apache pilot awarded Air Medal with Valor

By Sgt. Richard Wrigley
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas -- Selfless service, bravery in the face of extreme opposition, courage under fire, all these words can be used to describe Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Leipold, a native of Hollidaysburg, Pa., and an AH-64D Apache helicopter maintenance test pilot for B Company, 4th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, who was recently awarded the Air Medal with V device for valor for his actions here Oct. 4.

While Leipold's actions in battle were quite remarkable, his story in the military begins much earlier than the events of that decisive day in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

His story started in 1993 when as a self described "young punk with very little ambition", Leipold enlisted into the Army as an M1A1 Abrams Tank crewman.

Leipold explained how while growing up, one thing that was constant for him was his involvement in sports and the team environment, and that it was the team mindedness of the Army which originally attracted him to the Service.

"I wanted to be a part of something that was bigger than myself," said Leipold.

After meeting with success within the enlisted ranks for almost nine years, Leipold eventually decided to pursue a career in aviation, he said.

"There was a lot of different reasons (I made the change), one was that the Apache is the premier attack aircraft of the world, there is nothing that really comes close to it, and I've al-

ways been intrigued by flight as well," Leipold said.

While flying is a large part of Leipold's life, there is a lot more to him explained Chief Warrant Officer 4, James Merideth, from Austin, Texas, the company standardization pilot for B Co., 4-227th, 1st ACB.

"He's not just a great pilot, he's very much a family man, and a devout Christian," said Merideth.

Merideth went on to describe how Leipold has been married for a number of years, and has five wonderful kids. He also detailed how education was an important factor in Leipold's life, whether it is military education, or the completion of his Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies.

Besides these successes he has had in life, Leipold has had many accomplishments in his career prior to the actions which lead to his most recent award. He has deployed to Iraq three times, has completed his first tour in Afghanistan, and has received numerous awards to include an Air Medal with V device for valor previous to this one, Leipold said.

When asked about the mission, Leipold was hesitant to speak too much on the subject due to its sensitive nature, as it was in support of special operations forces, yet he had no problem explaining the importance of his job on the battle field.

"What we do is close air support for the ground trooper. When contact is made, everybody else runs away from it, but we run to it, because someone needs us. That's basically what we do," Leipold explained. "We know we're going into an area that's not going to be friendly, but we know there are good guys on the ground, and we make



Photo by Sgt. Richard Wrigley, IACB, 1st Cav. Div., PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas -- Lt. Col. Henry Perry (second from left), commander of the 4th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, poses for a picture with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Leipold (right), a native of Hollidaysburg, Pa., and an AH-64D Apache helicopter maintenance test pilot for B Company, 4-227th ARB, 1st ACB, at Hood Army Air Field here, Oct. 4.

our money by making sure they come home."

"The job satisfaction you get from helping someone on the ground, who really needs it is unparalleled in my opinion," Leipold said.

"If you talk to any Apache pilot across the board, you'll get the same thing, it's all about the ground guys," Leipold added.

As far as the specific actions that Leipold was awarded for, his award describes a day where as Air Mission Commander and Pilot-in-Command, Leipold and his team successfully engaged and destroyed over twenty enemy fighting positions, all while taking extreme amounts of enemy fire, in order to ensure that U.S. and British Special Operations Forces could safely and successfully infiltrate and occupy the area the next day.

Leipold himself said that when they flew into the area the enemy fired from about 15 heavy machinegun positions, and at any one time 16 or 17 rocket propelled grenades were flying through the air.

Merideth also shed a little light on the mission.

"Some of our guys had already flew in to check out the area the night before ... (Leipold) knew the sheer amount of enemy firepower he would have to fly into ... he knew he was going to go put himself, his life, his aircraft in danger ... and he didn't even bat an eye at it, (Leipold) said 'absolutely, yea, put me in,'" Merideth said.

Leipold's award concludes with, "his actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of military heroism and reflect distinct credit upon himself, (his unit), and the Army."

'Nomads' return from Afghanistan



(LEFT) FORT HOOD, Texas -- Soldiers from F Company, 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, touched down at Robert Gray Army Airfield Sept. 25, here. The Soldiers of F Co. returned from Afghanistan where they provided ground commanders with reconnaissance utilizing unmanned aerial vehicles.

(RIGHT) FORT HOOD, Texas -- A Soldier (right) from F Co., 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, holds his son on his shoulders following a welcome home ceremony Sept. 25, here.



Photos by Sgt. Richard Wrigley, IACB, 1st Cav. PAO



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'Mustang' battalion hosts gunnery family day

By Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Many spouses may not understand their Soldiers' job or why they have to be in the field for weeks at a time, so to help give them a Soldiers perspective, families spent the day with their Soldiers during gunnery.

The 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment "Mustangs," 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, hosted a family day at Clabber Creek Multiuse Range, here Oct. 19.

Mustang family members were invited out to the range to see a tank live-fire exercise, visit with their Soldiers, enjoy Fall-inspired food and learn about the armor equipment, said 1st Lt. Aaron Scherffius, the Mustang's engineer officer.

The Mustangs' Family Readiness Group helped organize the event, which boosted morale and brought families together.

"Family day was a big morale boost for the Soldiers," Scherffius said.

"Also, it allows the spouses and families to gain a better understanding of what their Soldiers do and what equipment they use."

Victoria Branam said she was very excited for this day as it was an opportunity to see her husband's work up close and get to spend time with him since his departure to the field



Photo by Sgt. Quentin Johnson, 2BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Layla Bowman, 7 years old, daughter of 1st Sgt. Adam Bowman, first sergeant for B Co. 1-8 Cav. "Mustangs," 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., looks out from the driver's hatch on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during the Mustang Family Field Day, here Oct. 19.

almost two weeks prior.

"It is really cool and exciting. I have a better appreciation of what my husband does," Victoria said, describing family day.

"(Victoria) gets to see what I do, the equipment I use and how we as Soldiers bond," said Adam Branam, a Mustang Bradley gunner. "The

spouses also see the massive responsibility that is entrusted to (the Soldiers)."

Jenna Bowman said it was a great opportunity to get a detailed perspective on her husband's work but was more excited just to see him, 1st Sgt. Adam Bowman, first sergeant of B Company, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt.

Seeing everything work in sync with all the components, she compared it to a family. "(Soldiers) are like a family. In the field they are together, work together and stay in sync."

Additionally, Soldiers were able to take pride in showing off their work and introducing their families to other Mustang families.

"Mustangs (Soldiers) show off their work, they have a lot of pride in what they do," Scherffius added.

"I feel good showing off my expertise, no matter what area of work it is in. It gives me a sense of pride," Adam Branam reiterated. "My wife and I were able to meet other spouses, which really helped complete field day."

Speaking with numerous family members, three positives came from the field day, said Lt. Col. Matt Kinkead, Mustang Battalion commander. As the entire Mustang force makes gunnery a success, so does the Mustang families make their Soldiers a success.

"Speaking with wives of various Mustang Soldiers, I heard positives: They see how important their Soldier's contributions to the unit are, they have a better perspective on life in the field and they know how much their support means to the battalion," Kinkead added.

The next family event is scheduled for December.

Lancers assist with Honor Flight

By Spc. Bailey Kramer
1BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

AUSTIN, Texas – "We can't all be heroes. Some of us have to stand on the curb and clap as they go by." These words, once spoken by Will Rogers, are the motto of the Honor Flight Network.

Fifty World War II Veterans from Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop and Caldwell Texas counties flew to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., from the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport here, Oct. 9.

Fourteen Soldiers assigned to A Company, 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division spent time with the veterans before they left the airport.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created to honor America's veterans for their

many sacrifices, by transporting them to Washington D.C. to visit their memorials.

"It goes without saying we would not be here without (veterans)," said Allen Bergeron, chairman of the Austin, Texas chapter of the Honor Flight Network. "I can't thank (veterans) enough."

The Honor Flights began in the 2004 to 2005 time frame when Air Force Retired Col. Earl Morse started flying a few World War II Veterans at a time.

"The Honor Flights soon became a national movement," Bergeron said, describing the quick growth of the program.

Starting out with only three or four World War II Veterans, the Honor Flights have now taken more than 85,000 veterans to Washington D.C. to see their memorial, stated Bergeron.

"It is great to be going to visit the memorial," said 94-year-old World War II Army nurse and veteran, Isabelle Cook.

Cook worked as an Army nurse for three years during World War II, serving in North Africa, Italy

and France.

"I think it's wonderful that the younger Soldiers are here, just to see them here and how helpful they've been," Cook said of the Lancer Soldiers assistance. "I'm very appreciative of it. I don't think they quite understand how much it means for them to be here."

The assistance of the younger generation of Soldiers meant a lot to the veterans, but they aren't the only ones who were grateful to be there.

"It is an honoring experience to help and talk to these veterans," said Austin, Texas native, 2nd Lt. Rob Wilson, an infantry officer assigned to the Lancer Battalion. "They have done so much, and sadly you don't know how long these men and women will be around. It's always a great experience to talk to veterans and get younger Soldiers involved."

Bergeron expressed his gratitude to the men and women for their sacrifices, "again, I can't thank you enough, from the bottom of my heart, thank you so much."



Photo by Spc. Bailey Kramer, 1BCT PAO

AUSTIN, Texas – As the Honor Flight participants prepare for take-off, the Austin Fire Department pays respect to the veterans with a waterfall salute, here, Oct. 9.

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Live The Legend!

Stallion Soldier uses obstacles as motivation

By *Spc. Bailey Kramer*

1BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Growing up, his dream was to be a United States Soldier.

Even with two hip surgeries only months apart, Kearny, N.J. native, Sgt. 1st Class Oscar Ayala, a platoon sergeant assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, “Ironhorse” 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, still manages to outperform his Soldiers.

“I always wanted to be a Soldier,” Ayala explained. “When I was in high school I told my recruiter I wanted to join the Army. I didn’t ask for anything, I just joined.”

Joining the National Guard in 1999, Ayala enlisted as a tanker. After a year and a half, he switched to active duty.

Serving in the position of platoon sergeant is special to Ayala.

“I never pictured myself being in the position I am in now,” he said. “I mean, I am just one of many at my position, but going back to my childhood, I never thought I would have this impact on other Soldiers, or even [noncommissioned officers].”

After converting to active duty, Ayala was stationed at Fort Lew-

is, Wash. where he stayed for two years before moving to Fort Hood, Texas in 2003. When arriving to Fort Hood, Ayala was assigned to the Ironhorse Brigade.

Since 2003, Ayala has been deployed four times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn and the most recent in Kuwait, Operation Spartan Shield.

Although he has deployed numerous times, he has not let it affect his attitude towards the Army.

“I know I have younger Soldiers looking up to me,” Ayala said, explaining his source of motivation. “I have to show my Soldiers that even though we go through tough times, we are still Soldiers and that’s what we get paid to do. We have to get the mission accomplished whether we are going through good or bad times.”

Chicago native, Spc. Sam Garcia feels as though he can look to Ayala for guidance and leadership.

“(Ayala) has always been approachable,” Garcia said about his respected mentor. “He’s (seasoned) and I know I can count on him to help me when I need him most.”

During the OIF ’06 to ’08

deployment, Ayala sustained a hip injury. While getting it checked out, the doctor informed him of a crack on his hip that needed to be fixed. During his check-up, problems were found in both hips resulting in a dual surgery.

Ayala’s first surgery was April 2011 with his second following less than two months later in June 2011.

Even with the surgeries in such a small time frame and the amount of pain that comes along with it, he has not let it stagger his motivation.

“I am still motivated, probably a little more,” Ayala said about the emotional impact of the surgery. “I learned to ignore the majority of the pain. Whether I am injured or not, I still go up there and lead my guys.”

Even after two hip surgeries, Ayala still receives a perfect score, of 300, on his physical fitness test, consisting of two minutes of push-ups, sit-ups and a two-mile run.

“I feel as though I set the bar for my platoon,” Ayala said about his success. “If I can do it, they can too. A lot of my guys see me trying and they get behind me, it keeps me and them motivated.”

This past year, Ayala was the tank commander of the Iron-

horse tank team that participated in the prestigious Sullivan Cup, a competition testing tanker’s skills across the United States Army.

During the competition, the first event was a PT test. Ayala was one of only two competitors to earn a perfect score of 300.

“It made me feel that although I am on the older side of the competitors, that age is just a number,” Ayala said about his physical condition. “It’s all in how you maintain yourself.”

Garcia finds his leader to be strong-willed and highly respected, but he isn’t the only one who recognizes his determined personality. Ayala’s wife of 25 years, Katherine, is also aware of his self-motivation.

“(Katherine) keeps telling me to slow down on the physical side of work, exercising and such,” Ayala chuckled. “But I remind her I am a leader and I can’t lead my Soldiers from the rear. She understands and is very supportive of my choices.”

With everything that has happened, Ayala has a supportive wife helping him push through his obstacles.

Ironhorse medic sole finisher in Cav “It’s a little bit hard,” Ayala said, talking about maintaining his positive attitude in front of his Soldiers. “But like I tell my guys, even though we go through tough times, I am a Soldier.”

Ironhorse medic sole finisher in Cav

By *Spc. Bailey Kramer*

1BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Joining the Army a little more than a year ago, one 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldier has already made a name for herself.

Union, Mo. native, Pfc. Christina Garcia, a combat medic assigned to Company C, 115th Brigade Support Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade, was one of 230 medical Soldiers to participate in the Expert Field Medical Badge Competition, here, Sept. 29 to Oct. 4.

Upon completion of the EFMB Competition only 22 competitors remained, Garcia not only being one of the few, but she stood as the sole 1st Cav. Div. “First Team” finisher.

“I could not be more proud of her,” said Garcia’s first sergeant, Summerville, S.C. native, Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Leonard. “With

234 candidates only 22 passed, only 22 got the badge.”

Earning the highly coveted EFMB is not an easy task Leonard explained.

One afternoon the command team entered C Co. and asked who wanted to compete for the badge.

“After (the command team) asked, all of us new medics were just like, ‘I don’t know what it is, but I’ll do it,’” chuckled Garcia.

Soon after volunteering to compete for the badge they began training, which lasted about two weeks prior to the event.

“Every day we were practicing a different task,” Garcia said about their unit training.

The morning of Sept. 24, Garcia and 21 other Ironhorse Soldiers stood ready to compete. “I wasn’t a primary candidate, I was only an alternate,” Garcia said about her first day. “I wanted to be like, look, I can do it.”

Medics are a natural com-

petitive group, Leonard said about Garcia’s competitive personality. “They are competing against themselves. There are so many criteria in a technical and tactical portion; you have to not only be a good medic, but a good Soldier.”

The first five days of the competition was familiarizing the participants with the standards of the competitions.

“The events are a sequential thing,” Leonard said about the importance of attention to detail. “You can get a no-go for going steps 1-3-5 instead of 1-2-3-4-5.”

The competition included many of the tasks they covered during their unit training: liter carries and putting them on the back of different military vehicles, assembling and disassembling radios, M-4s, M-16s and M-9s, and various medical skills.

“I really enjoyed doing the medic lanes,” Garcia said about her favorite event. “I was actually getting to use the skills I learned in

(Advanced Individual Training). It was the one I was most comfortable with and it was fun.”

Although there were many memorial events for Garcia, and she enjoyed herself, it wasn’t an easy adventure for her.

“The (evacuation) lane was physically challenging,” Garcia said about the most trying event. “There was a lot of moving, over and under objects and we had to do a low crawl with a litter under barbed wire.”

Upon completing the event, Garcia now has a newfound confidence in herself and medical abilities.

“This competition gave me a lot of confidence in myself as a medic. I worked really hard for it and it’s something no one can ever take away from me. I literally put blood, sweat and tears into this,” Garcia said, remembering the rain, mud and falling in a creek. “I feel as though this competition has opened a lot of doors for me.”

Garcia isn’t the only one who believes in the number of opportu-

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Medic: *From page 4*

nities this accomplishment has opened for her.

“Earning her badge as a (private first class), she has set herself well above her peers,” Leonard said about her Soldier. “She is setting herself more competitive for her career.”

When crossing the finish line of the final event, a 12-mile road march, Leonard was standing there waiting for her.

“I literally caught her as she crossed the finish line,” Leonard said of the exhausted participant. “I realized she was the only one from our unit left, I couldn’t have been more proud.”

Upon arriving at the field to receive her badge, Garcia learned she was not only the sole Ironhorse recipient, but also the only Soldier from the First Team to earn an EFMB during this testing.

“It felt pretty good,” Garcia said about her feelings on learning her standing throughout the division. “Everyone did a really good job, I just happened to get a little further than they did. This whole experience has been a confidence booster.”

While Garcia is still new to the Army, completing the EFMB was a big motivator for Garcia to excel in the military, but she hasn’t quite decided if she wants to make it a career.

“I don’t know what I want to do with the Army,” Garcia said about her thoughts on a military career. “It is really kind of quick to tell, I have only been in the Army for a year. So far, I love it, I love the camaraderie. I could definitely see myself making it a career.”

Garcia has a slot waiting for her at Air Assault School once her feet have healed. She also hopes to attend flight medic school and become airborne qualified.

“I really appreciate all the help and support I got from my chain of command and fellow Soldiers,” Garcia concluded. “I wouldn’t have been able to do it without them.”



Photo by Capt. Angel Jackson-Gillespie 1BCT PAO
FORT HOOD, Texas – Union, Mo. native, Pfc. Christina Garcia (wearing blue gloves), a combat medic assigned to C Co., 115th BSB, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div., assists a dummy-casualty during Expert Field Medical Badge training with her evacuation platoon, here, Oct. 25.

Air Cav view possible replacement for Kiowa

By Sgt. William Begley
11th Public Affairs Det.

FORT HOOD, Texas - With all of the innovations that have taken place on the battlefield and in the air over the last 37 years, it might be difficult for some to believe that the Army is still using helicopters that were in use during the Vietnam War. Yet, the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior scout helicopter is still widely used by the Army today.

Senior aviators from III Corps and the 1st Cavalry Division flew a new helicopter Oct. 12 at Robert Gray Army Airfield on West Fort Hood that could potentially replace the OH-58 Kiowa. The flights were the first in a series of tests that could eventually replace a scout helicopter that has been in service for the Army since 1969.

“This is one of the models that are currently being looked at to replace the Kiowa, the OH-58D platform has been around since the Vietnam era,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Troy DeGolyer, command chief warrant officer, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Div. “The reason for bringing in Army aviators, aircraft mechanics and crew chiefs into this mix is that the industry gets feedback from everybody as to help shape and build this aircraft to be competitive and actually fit as a replacement for the 58D.”

DeGolyer flew with one of the pilots from American Eurocopter, designers of the civilian version of the Armed Aerial Scout 72X+ (plus) and ran through some simple flight maneuvers to demonstrate the flight characteristics and perfor-



Photo by Sgt. William Begley, 11th PAD

FORT HOOD, Texas - Lt. Col Karsten Haake and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Troy Wyatt talk with industry professionals before a test flight of the civilian version of the Armed Aerial Scout 72X+ at Robert Gray Army Airfield on West Fort Hood Oct. 12.

mance of the aircraft.

“It handled very well the flight characteristics were great. The aircraft had great maneuverability and was very easy to fly,” DeGolyer said.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Troy Wyatt was also on hand to fly the new aircraft. He was impressed with its performance as well. Wyatt is an AH-64 Apache Longbow pilot, D Company, 4th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st ACB.

“It was a very clean and smooth flying aircraft. It has a lot of power and is incredibly agile,” Wyatt said. “Coming from an AH-64 background it was a little less robust, that is to say the size, weight and feel of the aircraft differ greatly. But if I had the opportunity to fly it again I wouldn’t turn it down.”

While there are obvious differences between the AH-64 Apache Longbow and the AAS

72X+, the pilots were able to deliver valuable feedback to the industry professionals at American Eurocopter which will help them to give the Army the exact kind of scout helicopter that will meet their needs. Needs like built in redundancies like twin engines as opposed to the single engine OH-58 Kiowa. If one engine is damaged in combat and fails, the pilots can still return home safely using the other engine.

Another senior aviator, Lt. Col. Karsten Haake, G-3 aviation, 1st Cav. Div. and a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot, didn’t fly the aircraft but took a hands-on look at it. He also listened to the briefings that outlined the capabilities of the aircraft. He summed up the experience.

“This is a great opportunity to see what is out there technologically and commercially for the future of Army aviation.”

Ironhorse Soldiers inducted into Sergeant Audie Murphy Club

By Capt. Angel Jackson-Gillespie
1BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas –Fifteen Ironhorse noncommissioned officers were inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club, Sept. 20, at Ironhorse Chapel.

Only a few exceptional NCOs are selected as members of the SAMC which recognizes those individuals who have made significant contributions to the NCO Corps and the Army.

“See you don’t just wake up one day and decide I’m going to be Audie Murphy,” said guest speaker and 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Linton. “You have to perform at a top level, have unquestionable ethics, values and morals. The kind of ethics, values and morals you only get from good upbringing from mom and dad back home. And then you’re brought into the United States Army and you join America’s First Team

where you’re taught how to be an unselfish leader.”

Each NCO was introduced by a Soldier who they had inspired. The Soldiers credited the NCOs for a myriad of qualities that gave insight into why the inductee was chosen for the SAMC.

Spc. Todd Lasham of B Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion explained how his NCO, Staff Sgt. Robert Schuelke of B Co., 1BSTB, encouraged him to continue to serve.

“He has truly inspired me to follow in his footsteps and develop into an outstanding leader,” Lasham said. “His willingness to lend a helping hand and dedication to Soldiers is the reason why I am still serving in the United States Army. He is truly a model of what a leader is.”

“I took him and just molded him and talked to him and showed him that not all leaders are the same,” Schuelke said. “There’re good leaders out there and you

know just take what you’ve learned ... from your good leaders and your bad leaders, and mold yourself so when you become a leader, you know how to treat the Soldiers that are below you.”

Staff Sgt. Christopher Bane of C Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. expressed excitement over being inducted into the SAMC.

“Overall, it’s just a positive experience from the beginning when someone told me they wanted me to go, that was just a big boost of moral in general and I look forward to trying to put some of my future Soldiers into this club as well.”

Linton encouraged the NCOs to use their SAMC membership to become better leaders.

“To the newest inductees, I challenge you today not to use this great accomplishment as a promotion tactic or stepping stone in your career,” Linton said. “Take what you have learned and use it to be the best leader in the military.”